



CMHC 6400
Counseling Couples & Families
Fall

Course Syllabus

1. **Instructor:** Brianna Randall, PhD, NCC
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Office Hours: Monday 1:30pm-3:30pm or by appointment
2. **Class Meetings:** This class is an asynchronous online course via Blackboard. Please refer to the course calendar for all important dates and any potential times that require scheduled synchronous online meetings.
3. **Textbook:** Gehart, D. (2018). *Mastering competencies in family therapy (3rd)*. Boston, MA: Cengage. ISBN# 9781305943278.
4. **Course Description:** The purpose of this course is to introduce the theoretical concepts and intervention strategies associated with traditional, systemic, and post-modern theories of couples and family therapy. Interventional strategies derived from couples and family counseling theory will be examined, and multicultural considerations for couples and family counseling will be addressed.
5. **Technology Statement:** Students will require access to a computer with Internet capabilities for the successful completion of this course.
6. **Nondiscrimination Statement:** Students will not be discriminated against based on age, body shape/size, color, culture, disability, education, employment status, ethnicity, family status, gender, gender expression, gender identity, genetic information, immigration status, incarceration experience, language preference, marital/relationship status, national origin, occupation/work, race, religion/spirituality, sex, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, veteran status, or any intersection of these identities. Nondiscrimination is expected to be upheld by the instructor and each student in this course.

7. **Course Objectives:** The course objectives are aligned with the specific learning outcomes identified by CACREP. The following CACREP Standards are addressed in this course:

CACREP STANDARDS	ASSESSMENTS
2.1.A) History and Philosophy of Counseling Profession and Specialty Areas	Quizzes and Final Examination
2.1.I) Ethical Standards or Professional Counseling Organizations and Credentialing Bodies	Quizzes and Final Examination
2.2.A) Multicultural and Pluralistic Characteristics Among Diverse Groups	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Final Examination
2.2.C) Multicultural Counseling Competencies	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Final Examination
2.3.A) Theories of Individual and Family Development Across the Lifespan	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Genogram, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.A) Theories and Models of Counseling	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.B) Systems Approach to Conceptualizing Clients	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.G) Essential Interviewing, Counseling, and Case Conceptualization Skills	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.H) Developmentally Relevant Counseling Treatment and Intervention Plans	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.I) Development of Measurable Outcomes for Clients	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.5.J) Evidence-Based Counseling Strategies and Techniques for Prevention and Intervention	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.7.B) Methods of Effectively Preparing for and Conducting Initial Assessment Meetings	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.7.C) Procedures for Assessing Risk of Aggression or Danger to Others, Self-Inflicted Harm, or Suicide	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
2.7.D) Procedures for Identifying Trauma and Abuse and for Reporting Abuse	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Final Examination
2.7.E) Use of Assessments for Diagnostic and Intervention Planning Purposes	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Genogram, and Final Examination
2.8.I) Analysis and Use of Data in Counseling	Quizzes and Final Examination
5.1.B) Theories and Models Related to Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Final Examination
5.1.C) Principles, Models, and Documentation Formats of Biopsychosocial Case Conceptualization and Treatment Planning	Quizzes, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination

5.2.A) Roles and Settings of Clinical Mental Health Counselors	Quizzes and Final Examination
5.2.F) Impact of Crisis and Trauma on Individuals with Mental Health Diagnoses	Quizzes and Final Examination
5.2.J) Cultural Factors Relevant to Clinical Mental Health Counseling	Quizzes and Final Examination
5.3.A) Intake Interview, Mental Status Evaluation, Biopsychosocial History, Mental Health History, and Psychological Assessment for Treatment Planning and Caseload Management	Quizzes, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
5.3.B) Techniques and Interventions for Prevention and Treatment of a Broad Range of Mental Health Issues	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, Genogram, Treatment Plan, and Final Examination
5.3.C) Strategies for Interfacing with the Legal System Regarding Court-Referred Clients	Quizzes, Discussion Boards, and Final Examination

- 1) Students will develop knowledge and understanding of theories and models of marriage and family counseling, including family systems therapy.
- 2) Students will develop knowledge and understanding of the institution of marriage and family, as well as cultural considerations for each of the two elements.
- 3) Students will acquire knowledge, skills, and competences in effective strategies for marital and family therapy, as well as appropriate referral modalities when needed.

8. **Course Requirements:** The following details the learning products to be completed in order to successfully pass this course:

- A) Twelve quizzes will be required for this course. The quizzes will provide an opportunity to assess the continuity of learning throughout the semester. Quizzes will be conducted as depicted on the syllabus calendar during the week indicated and must be completed by **midnight of the Sunday within the given week**. Quizzes will cover the preceding course materials as reflected in the course calendar. The quizzes will be in *multiple choice format*. Students who fail to complete the quizzes during the allotted time will not be able to complete the quizzes without valid documentation.
- B) Seven discussion board entries will be required for this course. Discussions boards will allow students to synthesize and reflect on the material being covered in the course, but also connect with other students and share ideas as the course progresses through the semester. The Instructor will post a discussion prompt, and each student must

provide a minimum of two substantial posts to receive credit. A post is deemed substantial if it demonstrates intentional thought, contributes to the discussion at hand, and is presented in a respectful manner. Please refer to the concept of Net Etiquette if there are any questions pertaining to the accepted guidelines of social respect within virtual communities. The discussions will become available on the first day of the given week, and responses must be submitted by midnight of the Sunday within the given week. Student who fail to complete the discussion board entries during the allotted time will not be able to complete the discussion board entries without valid documentation.

- C) One family treatment plan will be required for this course. The treatment plan will create an opportunity to conceptualize a family case and prepare an initial treatment plan. Students are to identify a family portrayed in a movie or television show and utilize the family as a case study. The report must be submitted via email using MS Word by midnight of the Sunday of the given week. Early submission is encouraged. Late submission will not be accepted without valid documentation. Note the following grading rubric for the case management plan in order to maximize points earned for this assignment:

	"A" Quality Work	"B" Quality Work	Below "B" Quality Work
Case Conceptualization (6 points)	A summarization of the case study provided with pertinent information is present. All vital family members are identified. Goals for family therapy are identified and connected to specific family therapy theory.	The summarization of the case study is not complete or incorrect. Vague depiction of the case conceptualization is provided, and goals are not succinct, objective, or measurable. There is question regarding the appropriateness of the therapeutic need within the goals.	No real summarization of the case study is provided beyond simple pieces of information related to the case. No goals are present.
Initial Treatment Plan (6 points)	A specific treatment plan aligned with a specified family theoretical orientation is provided. The elements within the treatment plan are	The treatment plan is loosely aligned with the specific theoretical orientation. The treatment plan is not in synch with the	No treatment plan is provided. The plan is not aligned with a theoretical orientation. No mechanism for assessing treatment

	appropriate given the case conceptualization goals. Mechanisms for assessing treatment progression are indicated.	goals per the case conceptualization.	progression is indicated.
Writing Mechanics (2 points)	The report is written at the graduate level. The writing is free of grammatical, punctuation, and spelling error.	One grammatical, punctuation, or spelling error is present.	More than one grammatical, punctuation, or spelling errors are present.

- D) One genogram will be required for this course. The genogram will allow students to participate in a widely popular family therapy technique, as well as provide personal insight into their family dynamics and the influential mechanisms. A comprehensive visual genogram of their family-of-origin, using appropriate and accepted genogram symbols and identifying relationship and emotional dynamics, must be provided with three levels indicated. The genogram must be submitted via email by midnight of the Sunday of the given week. Early submission is encouraged. Late submission will not be accepted without valid documentation.
- E) One comprehensive final examination will be required for this course. The examination will allow the opportunity to assess the collective learning throughout the semester. The examination will cover all lecture content and class discussion during the semester. The examination will be in *multiple choice format*. **The examination must be completed by midnight of the Sunday of the given week.** Students absent at the time of administration will not be able to complete the examination without valid documentation.

9. Course Evaluation:

Twelve quizzes @ 3 points each =	36 points
Seven discussion board entries @ 4 points each =	28 points
One family treatment plan @ 14 points =	14 points
One genogram @ 12 points =	12 points
One final examination @ 10 points =	10 points

	100 points

100-96 points = A 95-90 points = A- 89-87 points = B+ 86-84 points = B
83-80 points = B- 79-77 points = C+ 76-74 points = C 73-70 points = C-

69-67 points = D+ 66-64 points = D 63-60 points = D- Under 60 points = F

LEAVE NO DOUBT

10. **Extra Credit Policy:** Extra credit will not be provided during this course.
11. **Attendance/Valid Documentation Policy:** Please refer to the Catawba Academic Handbook for an explanation of the Catawba College attendance policy. It will be used in this class during this semester:
- Effective learning is facilitated by an interaction between the professor and students regarding course material. The classroom is the principal arena for such interaction. Thus, students have an obligation to themselves, to fellow students, and to the faculty member to attend and participate actively in classroom sessions. The class attendance policy followed by the college assigns to each faculty member the responsibility for establishing and communicating to students the specific attendance requirements for his or her courses consistent with the objectives of the course. Therefore, specific course attendance policies will vary from course to course. The attendance policy for each course will be presented to the student in written form, usually as part of the course syllabus, at the beginning of the course. The course attendance policy and practices, however, will subscribe to the following general guidelines:*
- A) *Each student is personally responsible for regular and punctual class attendance.*
 - B) *A student who misses a class bears personal responsibility for completing any assignment presented during that class to the extent permitted by the nature of the assignment and the course syllabus.*
 - C) *The faculty member has the option of assigning a failing grade to any student who misses more than one quarter of the class meetings, but this option must be stated in the course syllabus.*
 - D) *Whenever possible, the student should inform the faculty member about an absence and make arrangements concerning missed assignments due to that absence.*
 - E) *The student is responsible for initiating discussions with the faculty member about a make-up opportunity for missed assignments or examinations.*
 - F) *The faculty member has no obligation to allow or facilitate make-up work except for absences due to "extenuating circumstances." Three sets of extenuating circumstances are recognized by the College: severe personal illness, death in the immediate family, or (when announced in advance through the Dean of Students' Office) authorized representation of the College.*
 - G) *If an extenuating circumstance is the cause of a student's missing a class period (or an examination), the student should not view the absence as an exception to the course attendance arrangements, as outlined in the course syllabus, but as a "just cause" for arranging a make-up opportunity. The faculty member, however, will determine the means of compensating for the missed course work or examination.*
- It is assumed that all students will attend to the class regularly in order to maximize learning. All assignments have defined due dates and times and will be strictly enforced. It is the student's responsibility to inform the Instructor if a known absence from the course will occur during the semester. It is the student's responsibility to acquire any missed materials from an absence from the course.

Valid documentation, which may grant a late assessment administration or a late assignment submission, only includes legitimate medical documentation or documents that support extenuating circumstances per Catawba College. No other excuses will be deemed valid. In the event of inclement weather, please check the Blackboard shell for any course information.

12. **Academic Honesty Policy:** Please do not give the Instructor any reason to suspect academic dishonesty. Students are advised to refer to Catawba College Honor Code:

In order to educate individuals to live responsibly in community and to create an environment that encourages respectful expression of values, without censorship, the Catawba community has developed and endorsed The Catawba College Honor Code. It is intended that the Honor Code will promote a climate of trust, concern, and respect conducive to learning and personal growth in community. Everyone who is a member of the Catawba community has responsibilities to respect others, to communicate honestly, to seek excellence, and to participate in creating a fair and compassionate atmosphere on campus. Faculty, administrators, and staff have responsibilities to endeavor to enhance the personal and intellectual development of other persons; to be compassionate, thorough, and fair in evaluating the performance of students and professional associates; to use the authority of their office in ways that respect persons and avoid the abuse of power; and to conduct their professional activities in ways that uphold the ideals of virtue and excellence. Therefore, Catawba College students, faculty, staff, and administrators are committed to the Catawba College Honor Code which is set forth as follows: "As a member of the Catawba College Community, I will uphold the value of academic honesty that grounds our institution, and I will not lie, cheat, or steal." The Honor Code does not condone dishonorable actions within any sector of Catawba College. Such actions include academic dishonesty, as well as social disrespect and any action harmful to the Catawba College community and its members. Violations of the law are also violations of the Honor Code. The Honor Code applies to students, faculty, administrators, and staff members. All members of the college community are obligated to be familiar with the Honor Code and to conduct themselves in accordance with the standards set forth. The complete text of The Catawba College Honor Code and the operating procedures of The College Court are found in the Student Handbook.

13. **Professional Behavior Policy:** Students in this class are future professionals. Students are responsible for all lecture materials, which will be made available to them online, and for completing all scheduled readings. Assignments in which academic honesty are in question will not be accepted. This includes utilizing resources during assessments (quizzes, exams, etc.) or collaborating with other students during the completion of such assessments. Behavior that is non-professional in nature will not be tolerated, and the student will be removed from the course and potentially the program. Please abide to the Catawba Academic Handbook and the CMHC Program Handbook for additional items regarding student behavior.

14. **Accessibility Policy:** Students with ADA-documented physical, sensory,

psychological, emotional, or medical impairments may be eligible for reasonable accommodations. Veterans may also be eligible for services. All accommodations are coordinated through the Catawba College Counseling and Disability Services (CDS) Office. If you have registered in a previous semester, continuation is not automatic. Action is required on your part, as accommodations are not retroactive.

15. Writing Center (Library Mezzanine): The Catawba Writing Center, in the Library Mezzanine, provides both face-to-face and online services to assist you with writing projects in all of your classes. Writing consultants, fellow Catawba students, are trained to help you with all stages of your writing process – brainstorming, drafting, research, organization, editing, and revision. Upload a draft of your paper, the assignment sheet, and your questions/concerns when making an appointment. For more information about our services and/or to make an appointment, please visit our website: catawba.edu/writingcenter

16. Expectations:

- Student Expectations
 1. Check your Catawba email and Blackboard account on a consistent basis each week. The primary method of communication in an asynchronized course is via email and Blackboard. Therefore, you are responsible to check and respond if needed on a weekly basis to the instructor and/or peers.
 2. Demonstrate professional dispositions in all interactions (discussion post, email and on Blackboard) with peers and instructors. Problematic behavior will be addressed as defined by our CMHC Program Handbook.
 3. All work submitted will be original, complete, and neatly presented.
- Instructor Expectations
 1. Instructor will reply to student emails within 48-72 hours.
 2. Provide expectations and structure to foster safety and trust in the learning environments and to assist students in exploring and vulnerably engaging with course materials and activities.
 3. Be available to support student learning outside of class time through email, during office hours, and by appointment.

17. Course Calendar: The following represents the scheduled agenda for each class meeting. Any changes will be announced as soon as possible.

Week of Course	Agenda	Assignments and Reading Due
Week 1 10/12-10/16	Introduction to Course, Review of Syllabus, Competency and Theory in Couples and Family Counseling and Research and Ethical	<i>Chapters 1 and 2</i> Discussion 1

	Foundations in Couples and Family Therapy Theories	
Week 2 10/17-10/23	Philosophical Foundations of Couples and Family Therapy Theories, Systemic and Strategic Couples and Family Therapies and Structural Family Therapies	<i>Chapters 3, 4, and 5</i> Discussion 2 Quiz 1 and 2
Week 3 10/24-10/30	Experiential Family Therapies and Intergenerational and Psychoanalytic Family Therapies	<i>Chapters 6 and 7</i> Discussion 3 Quiz 3 and 4
Week 4 10/31-11/6	Cognitive Behavioral and Mindfulness-Based Couples and Family Therapy and Solution-Based Couples and Family Therapies	<i>Chapters 8 and 9</i> Discussion 4 Quiz 5 and 6
Week 5 11/7-11/13	Narrative and Collaborative Couples and Family Therapies and Couples and Family Case Conceptualization	<i>Chapters 10 and 11</i> Discussion 5 Quiz 7 and 8 Genogram
Week 6 11/14-11/20	Clinical Intake and Risk Assessment, Treatment Planning and Documenting Couples and Family Progress Notes	<i>Chapters 12, 13, and 15</i> Discussion 6 Quiz 9 and 10
Week 7 11/21-11/27	Evaluating Progress in Couples and Family Therapy, Integrating Couples and Families and Clinical Mental Health Counseling, The Legal Context of Couples and Families	<i>Chapters 14</i> Discussion 7 Quiz 11 and 12
Week 8 11/28-12/4		Family Treatment Plan Final Examination